

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A communications interface system for communicating information in a plasma processing system, comprising:

a power delivery system component including a standard POD interface for communicating information that complies with a first protocol;

a portable device coupled between the standard POD interface and a second communication interface for communicating information therebetween, the second communication interface communicating information that complies with a second protocol, the portable device being detachable from the standard POD interface and the second communication interface;

a first communication link for coupling the standard POD interface to the portable device; and

a second communication link for coupling the portable device to the second communication interface.

2. The communications interface system of Claim 1 wherein the standard POD interface uses a custom protocol.

3. The communications interface system of Claim 2 wherein the second communication interface uses a standard protocol.

4. The communications interface system of Claim 3 wherein the standard protocol is selected from the group of analog interface, USB, Ethernet, Devicenet, Profibus, Modbus, and Infrared Transceiver.

5. The communications interface system of Claim 1 wherein the portable device further includes a mass storage device.

6. The communications interface system of Claim 5 wherein the mass storage device is selected from the group of CD-ROMs, FlashCards, Optical Disks, and magnetic media.

7. The communications interface system of Claim 1 wherein the portable device includes a plurality of interface ports for interfacing with more than one communication interface.

8. The communications interface system of Claim 1 wherein the portable device further includes a coprocessor.

9. The communications interface system of Claim 1 wherein the second communication interface is a customer interface.

10 11. The communications interface system of Claim 1 wherein the power delivery system component is selected from the group of V/I probes, generators, matching networks, and power amplifiers.

11 12. A communications interface system for a plasma generator system, comprising:

a power delivery system component including a standard POD interface for communicating information that complies with a custom protocol;

a portable device coupled between the standard POD interface and a customer communication interface for communicating information therebetween, the customer communication interface communicating information that complies with a standard protocol, the portable device being detachable from the standard POD interface and the customer communication interface;

a first communication link for coupling the standard POD interface to the portable device; and

a second communication link for coupling the portable device to the customer communication interface.

12 13. The communications interface system of Claim 12 wherein the portable device further includes a mass storage device.

14. The communications interface system of Claim 13 wherein the mass storage device is selected from the group of CD-ROMs, FlashCards, Optical Disks, and magnetic media.

15. The communications interface system of Claim 14 wherein the portable device further includes a coprocessor.

16. The communications interface system of Claim 12 wherein the portable device further includes a coprocessor.

17. The communications interface system of Claim 15 wherein the portable device includes a plurality of interface ports for interfacing with more than one communication interface.

18. The communications interface system of Claim 17 wherein the power delivery system component is selected from the group of V/I probes, generators, matching networks, and power amplifiers.

19. A communications interface system for communicating information in a plasma processing system, comprising:

a generator assembly including a standard POD interface conforming to a custom protocol for communicating information, the standard

POD interface including a communication port for receiving communication signals;

a first communication link having a first end detachably coupled to the standard POD interface communication port;

an interface portable device detachably coupled between the standard POD interface and a second communication interface for communicating information therebetween, the second communication interface conforming to a standard protocol, the interface portable device converting information flowing between the standard POD interface and the second communication interface such that information flowing to the second communication interface conforms to the standard protocol and information flowing to the standard POD interface conforms to the custom protocol; and

a second communication link for detachably coupling the portable device to the second communication interface.

20. The communications interface system of Claim 19 wherein the portable device further includes a mass storage device.

21. The communications interface system of Claim 19 wherein the portable device includes a plurality of interface ports for interfacing with more than one communication interface.